

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3170

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 6712

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SENV, XL, XK, CA, CU, MX

SUBJ: CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MEETING ON LAND-BASED SOURCES OF
MARINE POLLUTION

1. SUMMARY. UNLESS EVENTS TAKE UNEXPECTED COURSE, SEEMS
PROBABLE THAT GOM WILL INVITE UNITED STATES AND CUBA TO
PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON LAND-BASED SOURCES
OF MARINE POLLUTION. END SUMMARY.

2. WHEN SCIENCE COUNSELOR, E/C COUNSELOR, AND VISITING
EPA REPRESENTATIVE CALLED ON UNDERSECRETARY OF HEALTH
AND ASSISTANCE VIZCAINO MURRAY AUGUST 1, LATTER SAID THAT
WITH REFERENCE TO TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH SPECIAL
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS,
CHRISTIAN HERTER, AND TO MR. HERTER'S LETTER OF JUNE 12,
MEXICO PROPOSES TO HOST REGIONAL MEETING ON MARINE POLLU-
TION. (VIZCAINO MURRAY HAD PUBLICLY INDICATED THIS
INTENTION AT EL PASO MEETING LAST YEAR.) VIZCAINO MURRAY
SAID THAT IDEA HAD THE BLESSING OF PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA,
OF HIS MINISTER (HEALTH MINISTER JIMENEZ CANTU), AND OF
FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA; THAT LATTER HAD SUGGESTED MEETING
BE SCHEDULED NO SOONER THAN JANUARY 1975 BECAUSE OF PRESENT
GOM COMMITMENTS--THUS CONFIRMING HERTER'S UNDERSTANDING OF
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MATTER--AND THAT DATE WOULD BE FIRMED UP WITH RABASA AS

OF SEPTEMBER 20, AND THAT GULF AREA CITY, POSSIBLY MERIDA OR COZUMEL, WOULD BE SITE.

3. WHEN WE NOTED THAT INVITATION TO CUBA COULD COMPLICATE MATTER FOR U.S., VIZCAINO MURRAY STATED FLATLY THAT HIS DESIRE TO INVITE CUBA CONCURRED IN BY ECHEVERRIA AND RABASA, BUT THAT SITUATION DELICATE AT THIS MOMENT, HOPEFULLY COULD BE CLARIFIED BEFORE SEPTEMBER 20 WHEN THIS MATTER IS SCHEDULED TO BE REVIEWED WITH RABASA. HE ALSO UNDERSTANDS HOW MATTER VIEWED BY USG. VIZCAINO SAID GOM CONTEMPLATES PARTICIPATION ALSO BY CANADA, GUATEMALA AND JAMAICA, WHICH COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEMS WITH CUBA PARTICIPATION, AND THAT AGENDA WOULD BE BROAD, INCLUDING LAND-BASED AS WELL AS MARINE POLLUTION.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY FORESEES AWKWARD SITUATION IF GOM PLANS TO GO FORWARD WITH INITIATIVE (DESIRED BY U.S. ENVIRONMENTALISTS, COMPLEMENTARY TO BALTIC AND NORTH ATLANTIC AGREEMENTS ON LAND-BASED SOURCES OF MARINE POLLUTION) IF, IN THE END, U.S. DECIDES NOT TO ATTEND BECAUSE OF CUBAN PARTICIPATION. EMBASSY RECOGNIZES CLEAR VALUE OF SUCH MEETING, AND IN LIGHT OF FACT THAT ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, LIKE THOSE OF HEALTH, KNOW NEITHER GEOGRAPHIC NOR IDEOLOGICAL BARRIERS, WOULD HOPE THAT U.S. MIGHT PARTICIPATE, AS IT DOES IN PAHO ON HEALTH MATTERS DESPITE CUBA'S PRESENCE. EMBASSY IS NOT AWARE WHETHER WASHINGTON OFFICES CONCERNED WITH CUBAN AFFAIRS PREVIOUSLY AWARE OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION AND LETTER MENTIONED IN PARA 2. WE BELIEVE DEPARTMENT SHOULD CONSIDER AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE FEASIBILITY OF U.S. PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE HOSTED BY MEXICO WITH CUBA ATTENDING.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTS PROMPT GUIDANCE ON THIS SUBJECT, AS VIZCAINO MURRAY LIKELY TO MOVE AHEAD PROMPTLY IN ORGANIZING CONFERENCE AND ISSUING INVITATIONS.
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